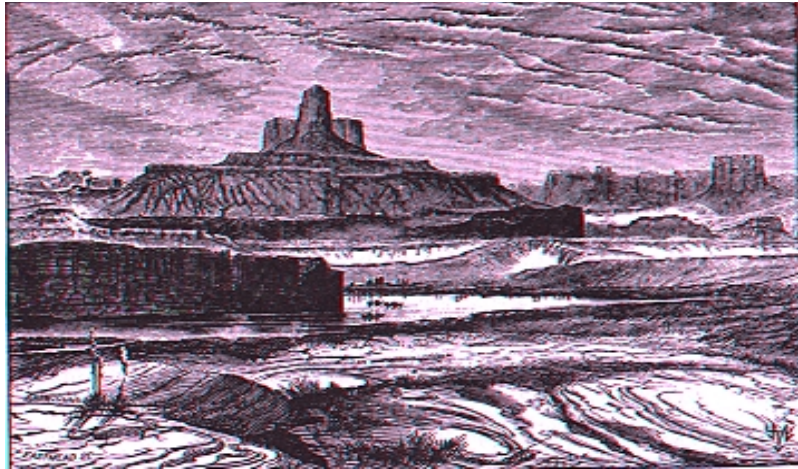


Canyonlands National Park, 1998 Friendship Cruise Survey

FINAL REPORT

Submitted to
National Park Service
Canyonlands National Park



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BACKGROUND

During the summer of 1998, the University of Minnesota Cooperative Park Studies Unit (CPSU) University of Vermont, and University of Montana administered a river trip survey in Canyonlands National Park. The purpose of this study was to better understand river use and users on the Colorado and Green Rivers as well as to obtain knowledge of visitor attitudes toward potential management actions. Information gathered will be used to guide development of a river management plan for the Colorado and Green rivers through Canyonlands National Park.

Overnight campers on the Colorado and Green rivers were asked to complete a “Trip Diary” and “Post-trip Questionnaire.” To obtain additional input from river users, participants of the 1998 Friendship Cruise, an annual event, also were given an opportunity to provide input through the completion of a two page questionnaire (appendix A).

The Friendship Cruise is an annual organized river event that takes place on Memorial Day weekend. For nearly four decades, boaters have been making the river trip from the town of Green River to the bridge in Moab, Utah. Support offered by the organized event includes opportunities for refueling at Mineral Bottom and Potash.

DATA COLLECTION

The authors, in collaboration with Canyonlands National Park, provided the organizers of the 1998 Friendship Cruise with approximately 60 surveys for distribution to participants of the cruise. Park Service staff were unable to ascertain exactly how many of the 60 surveys were given to the 83 participants of the event. It is estimated, however, that the number handed out was between 40 and 50. Park staff contacted participants at fueling points (Mineral Bottom and Potash) to remind them to complete the survey. A total of 25 completed surveys were mailed to the CPSU in the postage-paid, self-addressed envelopes furnished to participants.

SURVEY RESULTS

Sixty percent of the respondents who answered the question concerning previous participation in the Friendship Cruise were on their first trip (table 1). Forty percent had previously participated in the event.

Participants gave a variety of reasons for taking part in the cruise. They frequently mentioned the scenic beauty of the rivers. Verbatim responses to question 2 are in appendix B.

Approximately two-thirds of respondents (64 percent) had taken other river trips in Canyonlands National Park (table 2). Participants’ verbatim descriptions of the types of other river trips they had taken in Canyonlands National Park are in appendix C. For about one-third of the respondents (36 percent), the Friendship Cruise was their first river trip in the park.

Verbatim comments concerning participants' feelings about how the National Park Service should address any problems or issues associated with river use in the new management plan are in appendix D.

Verbatim comments concerning participants' feelings in regard to the types of management actions the National Park Service should consider for the rivers in Canyonlands National Park are in appendix E.

Nearly half the participants (46 percent) listed Utah as their current residence (table 3). A substantial portion (42 percent) currently resided in Colorado. The remaining 3 participants reported New Mexico or California as their current state of residence.

The majority of respondents (68 percent) spent 2 nights camping on the river (table 4). The remainder camped either 1 or 3 nights, and one party did not camp. (No distinction was made in the questionnaire as to whether participants camped inside or outside the boundaries of Canyonlands National Park.) Verbatim comments regarding the site at which participants camped are in appendix F.

Table 1. Previous participation in the Friendship Cruise.

Frequency	N	Percent
First time participant (1 trip)	12	60.0
Return participant (multiple trips)	8	40.0
Total	20	100.0

Source: 1998 Friendship Cruise survey.

Table 2. Incidence of other river trips taken by Friendship Cruise participants in Canyonlands National Park.

Previous river trips in Canyonlands National Park	N	Percent
No previous river trips	9	36.0
One or more previous river trips	16	64.0
Total	25	100.0

Source: 1998 Friendship Cruise survey.

Table 3. Residence of Friendship Cruise participants.

State of residence	N*	Percent
Utah	12	46.2
Colorado	11	42.3
New Mexico	2	7.7
California	1	3.8
Total	26	100.0

Source: 1998 Friendship Cruise survey.

*One survey listed the residences of participants from two different states.

Table 4. Number of nights camped during Friendship Cruise.*

Number of nights	N	Percent
0 nights	1	4.0
1 nights	4	16.0
2 nights	17	68.0
3 nights	3	12.0
Total	25	100.0

Source: 1998 Friendship Cruise survey.

* No distinction was made in the questionnaire as to whether participants camped inside or outside Canyonlands National Park.

APPENDIX A

1998 Friendship Cruise Survey

APPENDIX B

Verbatim comments from questions 1 and 2 of 1998 Friendship Cruise survey

1. How many times have you participated in the Friendship Cruise? and
2. What are the primary reasons you are participating in the Friendship Cruise?

4 times & every trip has been expertly operated and spectacular beyond words. It's something I wish everyone could see and every time more restrictions are put on the area the experience & scenery is taken away from that many more people.

To see the area with privacy and seclusion. At our own pace, without having to depend on others or having to go with others whom we don't know. Its nice to see at our own pace, with our own timing & thoughts.

Once.

To see and enjoy the spectacular beauty of the canyon and the river.

This was my first time.

To see more of the river ways in Utah, and to recreate during Memorial Day.

This year is first time.

1.) enjoy the beautiful scenery & canyons.

2.) participate in an event w/other powerboats & with people who have same interests as mine.

One--1998.

Wanted to take my own boat on the river. First time out, I liked having the support & safety of the organized event. Having gas available & the vehicle shuttle was a big plus.

5 times.

1. Organized event ensuring safety for an extended 180 mile river cruise.

2. Would not attempt this long a trip without their support.

3. Large social event--meet new friends--see old friends.

4. See beautiful country/not easily accessible at other times.

Once.

A family adventure. Something truly different, beautiful, rugged, exciting.

38--every year they have had it. Twice it was called off because of low water.

Love the Green & Colorado. The most beautiful place on earth.

Twice.

Great opportunity to view the canyon lands from a different perspective. Great friendly people. This has been a great opportunity to share with my family.

3 times "96," "97," "98."

Able to get access to remote parts of southern Utah. Because it's very well organized. It's fun, not crowded over Memorial weekend.

2 times 1997 & 1998.

The relaxing and scenic beauty of the Green and Colorado River.

Once this year.

I wanted my family to have the experience of the rivers and it was wonderful. It was done in a safe way I could never have done it safely without the help of all of these wonderful people.

2

- 1) One of the few opportunities to cruise a river within reasonable distance from home.
- 2) The beautiful views.
- 3) The opportunity to take hikes in the park.

8

I like the river and the people on the cruise.

4

Good scenery--lack of crowds.

This was the tenth (10) Friendship Cruise for me and the seventh (7) for my wife. I began this experience in 1980. This has been in 5 different boats with eleven (11) different people. We are 71 yrs of age and can enjoy this trip.

To be able to enjoy the backcountry and its beauty and solitude. We seniors are not physically able to do this without a motorized conveyance. This cruise offers security and we need that in our physical condition. To be able to enjoy the parks beauty is only possible this way. Younger people can hike & canoe to enjoy this area.

98 was our first year.

To get an opportunity to explore the park & river. To also go camping and relax.

One.

Recently purchased a river boat & felt this a perfect opportunity to use it.

One time--1998.

So we could enjoy the outstanding scenery.

One

New experience. New sights.

10

For the scenery and excitement. You can't experience simply looking down from the rim. As myself and family members are getting older hiking down to the water is out of the question.

First time.

We like southern Utah & we like to boat & camp. This seemed like a opportunity to see some great scenery & have a unique adventure.

33--Also during the late 70's and early 80's we worked with the Park Service on pre-cruises and post cruise to access campsite impacts etc. This would add more to the number of times I've been around. Also many private trips.

Tradition, I really enjoy the river environment and river boating. Very interested in river and local history.

1 time & we'll do it again next year!

To experience the beauty of the canyon & meet people with similar interests. Friends of ours do it every

year as we will too.

Two times.

I'm unable to go from Green River to Moab without the fuel stops provided by the Friendship cruise & the support if a breakdown occurs. It's an opportunity to explore & relive history on the river.

APPENDIX C

Verbatim comments from question 3 of 1998 Friendship Cruise survey

3. Have you taken other river trips in Canyonlands National Park? If yes, what types and how often?

No.

No.

Yes. Fisher Tower's Moab Utah day use area.

Rafting trips -- 4 times in the last 6 years.

No.

Yes many. 2 with raft companies--Adventure Bound. Many others on my own jet boat on the Colorado. 2-3 day trips for relaxation & catfishing. Average 3 trips a year + Friendship Cruise.

Rubber raft, Moab to Hite.

Raced in the river marathon when it was run, and when the kids were younger we would go down the Colorado 2 to 3 times for a week in the summer. I have probably been on the river 60-70 times.

No, I have in other parks. Canoeing in Yellowstone. I have rafted the Middle Fork of the Salmon & Main "River of No Return."

No.

1 time in a raft. The Friendship Cruise is a lot better.

None, they cost too much.

No.

Yes, overnite in a outboard jet boat--once a year.

No.

No other only the (10) Friendship Cruises in 1980-82-83-84-87-92-93-94-96-98.

No.

No.

No. Have been in the park 3 times by car.

No.

No.

We have floated Cataract.

No.

Not yet!

Yearly at a minimum & 4 wheel trips to Devil's kitchen & surrounding areas.

APPENDIX D

Verbatim comments from question 4 of 1998 Friendship Cruise survey

4. Please describe any problems or issues associated with river use that you feel the National Park Service should address in the new management plan.

I think the issue of respect for others & the environment, which already seen to be addressed on a personal level. What I see to be the problem of the Tamarisk over running and displacing all other natural plants and using untold amounts of water. Do they serve any good purpose, if so, does it over ride the undesirable effects? Also why can't Anderson Bottom be used as in the past?

It would be helpful if there were more areas along the river to beach boats and for overnight camping.

I felt that there were no problems other than campsite accessibility. This trip is spectacular. I hope they keep the Friendship Cruise going another forty years. I think it would be totally discriminatory to disallow motorized boats, rafts, to run these sections of water, as I understand it, you can only do this once a year anyway I think a person should have more access than that to do the total loop.

Points of interest, streams, etc. marked with signs to help a person know where they are on the river(s). Safety & patrols on the river was minimal. Friendship Cruise personnel were not available when we needed help. Their map (provided) was poor & assistance was minimal.

We have enough wilderness areas and areas which restrict motorized travel. Keep all areas which are now open to motorized travel open in the future.

Personal watercrafts will continue to be a major problem (Jet Skis, waterbikes, waverunners, etc.). Canoeists are inconsiderate and often hateful toward any motorized craft. (Unless they are being driven out then its ok). They feel rafts, or boats under power ruin their wilderness experience. Outfitters/guides/sportsmen & jet boaters seem to be cooperating and respecting each others rights and the resources.

Can the worst of shallow, rocky areas be marked or boaters be made better aware of the danger in some other way? I lost two props on hidden rocks.

The tamarisk is destroying the river.

Possible designated camping spots or more developed ones.

Possible designated camping spots. Require porta-potty to all boaters.

The friendship cruise directors and personnel should be commended for their knowledge and understanding of this event. They are great. No problems at all!

None--it was great.

I believe that most visitors will follow regulations set to protect the park. Make this information available to all visitors. The information should include an explanation for the need for each rule and how it will help preserve the park.

Rubber rafts are 80 to 90% of the total river use. Raft use impact the environment much more than the power boat users. Power boaters don't often spend the night, and the group size is much smaller.

None.

We only have this one weekend each year to enjoy our park by this river. Canoeists can go anytime--it would be safer and more convenient for everyone if they would just layoff this one Wkend but we will continue to be considerate if they are there when we are.

The trip was terrific. The regulators at Green River were very organized and friendly. They were a big help also, in Moab with getting our truck & trailer to us very quickly. We found camp sites fairly early were all was clean or keepup.

None--people were all courteous & kept the environment free of trash, sewage, and fire pits.

Would like to see some camp sites on the rivers for boaters.

No.

Upon hearing about the possibility of the Park Service banning the cruise in the future, I was quite concerned. This is a once a year tradition. This new policy of the Park Service to make things less accessible to ordinary or somewhat handicapped persons is repugnant to me, as I have seen too much of it in my home state. Places I enjoyed regularly are now inaccessible or closed.

The tamarisk presents some difficulty in finding camp sites along the river. The gas stops that were set up by the organizers were very helpful.

The park service should keep all powerboating equal. Special consideration should not be given to 30'-40' jet boats hauling canoes etc. They cause as much impact or more than a normal powerboat. Tradition holds that power boaters have secured their place in the Green and Colorado river history and should remain free to use the rivers.

Everyone did an outstanding job and we did not run across any problems or anyone who had any problems. The Rangers & volunteers were exceptional & friendly & there to make sure everyone was ok.

THE TAMARISK!! Why is it allowed to grow & spread? Why is it being "protected"? I was informed that the reason for the Friendship Cruise campout being no longer allowed was to protect the Tamarisk. Makes no sense to me at all.

APPENDIX E

Verbatim comments from question 5 of 1998 Friendship Cruise survey

5. What types of management actions do you feel the National Park Service should consider for the rivers in Canyonlands National Park?

I think the NPS should manage it in such a way that all groups have the right to usage equally. I don't see where the NPS has any right to make decisions about who or how, but should only enforce, patrol, and maintain.

I do not feel that it would be in the public interest to do anything that would restrict the use & enjoyment of the river.

I believe the National Park Service could have some kind of marking system so people don't miss so many of the available side trips.

Allow more freedom for power boats to use the river. (less restrictions) Better provisions for additional places to purchase gasoline for boats (we ran out of gas twice).

Continue as is.

Working closely with BLM in partnership. Boat ramps should provide info on BLM & NPS concerns on river. Coordination is a must. Size of groups is my biggest concern due to impact on riparian-shoreline by large groups. I.e. rafts w/ 50 people per group in same camp. Friendship Cruise spreads small groups over large area.

You are doing fine. I saw no signs of abuse. People are getting the message.

Burn the *@!?! tamarisks.

None--keep this opportunity alive so we and others can enjoy.

I purchased a personal water craft specifically to make the Green River Colorado River run. I was disappointed that I didn't get the chance to do it once before the closure. Although I must admit that I agree with the ban of PWC from canyon lands. But I would like to see maybe like a 1 week (7 day) opening to PWC, per summer on maybe a mid June week.

It would be nice to have mile markers and points of interest signs in a few locations on the rivers.

You should let this river trip go on--as it does--or has--it was great. My family so much enjoyed it. The trip and the people were the greatest. Please don't shut the river down to this activity--and leave it open to only the Pro. river boat companies--I don't care if they are there. They should not care if I am there.

I would like to continue enjoying the Friendship Cruise. I believe that is reasonable to accommodate this type of use once a year. I believe education is critical to ensure all users rafters, canoers, hikers, and boaters take proper action to preserve the park.

None. Just enforce the existing ones.

Keep it open to everybody--including power boaters.

Please continue the Friendship Cruises. It would be very helpful to allow a day earlier (put in) so that we could spread out the crowd a little. In earlier years we were allowed to go in on Thursday so we could take a little more time to enjoy the trip and reduce the no of boats per day.

We would encourage more trips like this one. It gives an opportunity to enjoy the river first hand and a chance to learn to appreciate what this type of country is all about.

Continue to enforce the environmental rules/laws as they are written now. Do not consider closing the rivers to power boat usage.

Ranger programs at campsites. All the help you can give Green River in putting on the Friendship Cruise.

None.

No change.

The exclusion of Jet skis is good but I would not like to see all power boating eliminated.

Plans in place now seem to be working fine. Excessive regulation doesn't seem to be necessary. Keep educating the public on safe boating, proper camping etc. There is way more river impact done by rafters, canoes, etc. than the once in a while power boater.

Better maps or mile markers to make it easier to know where you are.

Stop protecting the Tamarisk! Facilitate the friendship cruise, it's a wonderful opportunity for people.

APPENDIX F

Verbatim comments from question 8 of 1998 Friendship Cruise survey

8. What were the locations or river mile numbers of your campsites during the 1998 Friendship Cruise, if you know (for example, Anderson Bottom, Horse Canyon, Confluence, Colorado River mile 25, etc.)?

10 mile above Mineral Bottom & at the Confluence.

1st night we camped in the area of Bull bottom. 2nd night was in the vicinity of Lockhart Canyon.

We camped both nights Green River section.

Night 1 around Bowknot Bend area--east side. Night 2 3-4 miles up from Indian Creek on west side.

1st Green \pm 10 miles downstream from Mineral bottom. 2nd 2 miles upstream from Moab.

Green River @ mm1 and mm32.

Green River ~ 50 miles from GR. Colorado ~ 50 miles from Moab.

Queen Anne Bottom about 85 miles down the Green. Indian Creek about 45 miles down the Colorado.

Potato Bottom mile marker 38 on Green & 31 on Colorado, Little Bridgecanyon.

Across from Potato Bottom, mile 38 Green. Little Bridge Canyon mile 30 Colorado.

Mineral Bottom

1) approx. 10 miles below Mineral Bottom.

2) approx. 20 miles above Confluence.

On the Green--3 miles below Registration Rock.

On the Green--10 miles before Confluence.

60 miles So of Green River (approx.)

Indian Canyon.

Green R. 1st night at Three Canyon mile #90 in Canyonlands river guide.

Green R. 2nd night at about mile #29 along North Bank at Valentine Bottom.

Col. R. 3rd night on small island at mile #25.

I'm sorry we did not have a detailed map. We bought one in Moab on Monday and plan to use it next year.

Approx. 3 miles upriver from Registration Rock.

"Arthur Wheeler-1891"-? inscription on rocks directly above camp.

1-night approx. mile 34 close to Foret Bottom.

2nd night approx. 1-1/2 mile above Moab.

Turks Head, Confluence.

About 10-15 mile below Mineral bottom & about 25 miles above the confluence.

Mineral Canyon, MGM/Potash takeout

We didn't keep track of them.

Only know the second night was at the Confluence.